

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, April 2011



Total crude steel production for the 64 countries reporting to the World Steel Association in February 2011 was estimated to be 117.4 million tonnes, an increase of 9.5% on February 2010. The total for the two months to date in 2011 was 11.3% up on the same period in 2010 at 245 million tonnes. However, excluding China, global crude steel production only rose by 10.2% in the two months. All regions showed an increase in both the month and year to date except for Africa and the Middle East.

In the European Union, crude steel production by the 27 rose by 8.5% in February, and by 7.8% to 29 million tonnes in the two months to date compared to the same period last year. German crude steel production rose by 7.9% in February, and by 6.1% in the year to date to 7.3 million tonnes. Production in Italy was up in February by 4.9%, while the two months total was up 7.4% to just under 4.4 million tonnes. Spanish monthly production increased by 6.4%, with the year to date up 5.2% to 2.8 million tonnes. French steel production was only up 5.6% in February, although the two months total was up by 6.6% to 2.4 million tonnes. United Kingdom steel production only increased by 0.4% in February, bringing the year to date total to just under 1.7 million tonnes, a drop of 5.3%. The only other countries to show a fall in steel production in the year to date were Romania (down 19%) and Bulgaria (down 2%). Belgian steel production showed the largest rise at 24.8% to 1.5 million tonnes in the two months.

Imports of steel by the European Union increased by 27% to 27.9 million tonnes in 2010 compared to 22 million tonnes in 2009. Russia remains the largest supplier of steel to the EU at 6.8 million tonnes, 24% of total imports in 2010. The Ukraine exported 5.6 million tonnes, 20% of the total, and China exported 3.9 million tonnes, 14% of the total. Half of the steel from Russia and the Ukraine was billets and slabs with hot rolled wide strip by far the next largest import. In the case of China one third of the steel imported was hot rolled wide strip with zinc coated steel accounting for a further 21%.

EU27 exports, however, only increased by 8.4% to 34.3 million tonnes. Turkey remains the largest market for the European Union taking 4.5 million tonnes in 2010, 13% of the total, followed by the USA at 3.7 million tonnes, 11% of the total. Algeria was the third largest market for EU steel at 3 million tonnes in 2010. One third of the exports to Turkey was hot rolled wide strip with coated steel accounting for a further 15%. Exports to the USA were more evenly spread, although tubes and pipes accounted for one quarter of the total. 60% of the exports to Algeria were deformed reinforcing bars with wire rod accounting for a further 12%.

Crude steel production in other European countries all showed increases. Turkish production in February jumped by 35% with the year to date total up 34% to 5.2 million tonnes. In Serbia the year to date production rose by 12% to 305 thousand tonnes.

For further information please contact: Phil Hunt Tel: +44 (0) 20 7343 3916 Fax: +44 (0) 020 7343 3903
e-mail: tradeadmin@issb.co.uk website: www.issb.co.uk or write to:
Publications Dept, Ref: SOTN, ISSB Limited, 1 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5DB, England

ACEA, the European car manufacturers association, reported that car registrations in Europe rose by 1.4% in February, while the year to date total only increased by 0.1%, to 2.1 million cars. German registrations were up 15% in February and by 16% in the two months to 435 thousand cars, while French registrations increased by 13% in the month and by 11% in the two months to 390 thousand cars. The Italian two months total, however, fell by 20% to 325 thousand cars, while in the UK the total was down 10% to 192 thousand cars. In Holland registrations rose by 24% to 124 thousand cars. The Spanish two months total fell by 26% to 120 thousand cars, while the Belgian total rose by nearly 10% to 106 thousand cars. These seven countries accounted for 81% of total registrations in Europe.

In the CIS crude steel production increased by 6.5% in February, while the year to date total was up by 8.5% to 17.8 million tonnes. Russia's monthly total only rose by 4.4%, while the two months were 8.3% up to almost 11 million tonnes. Ukrainian steel production rose by 10.1% in February, bringing the year to date total to 5.6 million tonnes, an increase of 7.5%. In Kazakhstan the two month crude steel production total increased by 34% to 760 thousand tonnes, while Belarus steel production increased by 3% to 423 thousand tonnes.

Turning to North America, US crude steel production rose by 7.2% in February, and by 11.3% in the year to date to 13.9 million tonnes. Mexican steel production was 1% down in the month, but 1.3% up in the two months to date to 2.7 million tonnes. Canadian production also fell slightly in February, but was 2.1% up in the year to date to 2.1 million tonnes.

In South America, there was an 11.4% increase in Brazilian crude steel production in February, with the year to date total up by 7.6% to 5.5 million tonnes. Argentinian production was 15% up in the month and rose by 11.3% in the two months to 799 thousand tonnes, while Venezuelan steel production in the year to date jumped by 56% to 476 thousand tonnes. Production in Chile was 15% up in the two months to 291 thousand tonnes.

South African crude steel production fell in February by 20%, while the year to date total was down 23% to less than 1.1 million tonnes. Egyptian steel production, however, increased by 5.3% in the two months to just over one million tonnes. Production in Iran rose by 5% in February, and by 13.5% in the year to date to 2.2 million tonnes. In Saudi Arabia steel production for the two months was 2.3% down at 891 thousand tonnes.

Crude steel production in the Far East rose in all 5 major countries. Chinese production increased by 9.7% in February and by 12.6% in the two months to 114 million tonnes. Japanese production was up 5.7% in February and by 8.2% in the year to date to 18.6 million tonnes. Indian production rose by 10% in February and by 8.9% in the year to date to 11.9 million tonnes. South Korean steel production increased by 26% in the month, while the year to date total was up 25% to 10.6 million tonnes. Taiwanese production rose by 20% in February and by 16% in the two months total to 3.4 million tonnes.

Chinese exports of steel in February 2011 dropped to 2.4 million tonnes from the January total of 3 million tonnes. This figure was the lowest since February 2010. Most of this fall was in flat products and tubes, while long products exports actually increased. Imports also fell to their lowest level since January 2009 at 1.06 million tonnes. Imports of CR, HR wide coil and galvanised steel all showed a particularly marked drop compared to January 2010.

**For further information please contact: Phil Hunt Tel: +44 (0) 20 7343 3916 Fax: +44 (0) 020 7343 3903
e-mail: tradeadmin@issb.co.uk website: www.issb.co.uk or write to:
Publications Dept, Ref: SOTN, ISSB Limited, 1 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5DB, England**